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27 February 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

**SUBJECT: Surfacing of OXCART - Discussion with Chairman
 Clarence Cannon and Members of Defense Sub-
 committee - 26 February 1964**

1. Pursuant to the Director's request, I talked with Representative Clarence Cannon in connection with a possible meeting of the CIA Subcommittee of House Appropriations in order that the Director could discuss the surfacing of OXCART. Mr. Cannon was most appreciative of this matter being brought to his attention but indicated he saw no possibility of a meeting in view of the existing schedule. He indicated, however, that in lieu of a meeting that I should discuss this with the individual members.

2. As I was preparing to leave, Mr. Mahon telephoned Mr. Cannon requesting a meeting within the hour, at five o'clock, to discuss certain aspects of the [redacted] The members involved in such a meeting happen to be the CIA Subcommittee members. Mr. Cannon requested that I return at five o'clock to furnish the same information to the members which had already been furnished to him. Upon checking this through Mr. Houston I met with the group at five o'clock.

3. I furnished them the general outlines of the problem making it clear that CIA was not being connected with the surfacing and that the announcement will specifically note that many aspects will remain classified and, consequently, only general performance data and other general information would be included. There was some concern by

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the members as to why this must be done but they appeared to understand the problems involved and the reasons behind the decision. Mr. Mahon particularly, with Ford, Sheppard and Bow joining in, gave their view that the story would not hold very long and that CIA would inevitably be brought into the picture. I noted that the Director had the same concern.

4. All the members but Mr. Cannon expressed the strong view that there should be no reference in the release to the fact that appropriate members of Congress had been informed. They realized that questions would be put to them individually but felt that it was better not to say anything about Congress in the release. I stated I would bring their concern to the Director's attention. There was also some expression of preference for having DOD make the announcement rather than the White House. Mr. Mahon expressed great concern as to how he could parry the questions regarding funds for the project but finally indicated he guessed he could handle it in connection with certain classified projects which DOD does present to the Committee.

5. All of the members expressed their very strong view that they must be provided with appropriate guidance in advance of the release. It was stated the Administration simply cannot leave them holding the bag. I stated that the release, of course, was being given final clearance at the highest level and that I would get it to them immediately when it is approved. While the Subcommittee was not entirely happy about the situation they did express their sincere appreciation at being informed but again cautioned that they must have appropriate guidance as soon as possible.

s/ **John S. Warner**

JOHN S. WARNER
Legislative Counsel

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